

A FAMOUS SELLER OF BOOKS.

Interesting Sketch of Henry Stevens, the London Book-Dealer.

"What is your business, Mr. Stevens?"

"I am a seller of books."

"Ah, a bookseller."

"No; a seller of books."

This dialogue, writes a London correspondent to *The New York Tribune*, which took place in court between the late Henry Stevens, of Vermont, and a cross-examining counsel, is characteristic enough of the man. He was a seller of books, but he did not choose to be confounded with the generality of booksellers, to whom books are merchandise and nothing more. He was, in his own department, one of the most learned and accurate bibliographers who ever lived. He had no superior, and no equal in London. People who knew him not may easily have been misled as to his real ability by the whimsicalities in which he delighted to indulge. On the title-page of the most serious, and certainly the biggest, volume he ever published—the "Catalogue of the American Books in the Library of the British Museum"—he describes himself as "Henry Stevens, G. M. B., M. A., F. S. A., etc." The student of the British museum or elsewhere might puzzle long over these initials before he discovered that G. M. B. stands for Green mountain boy. He clung to his birthplace and old home with affectionate tenacity, and habitually signed himself, in print as well as in private, Henry Stevens, of Vermont. That is the name he put to the delightful little volume "Who Spoils Our New English Books?"—the least, I think, of his publications; and he adds to it "Bibliographer and Lover of Books." Then follows a list of antiquarian and historical societies in both worlds of which he was member; then, without visible transition or so much as a comma, "Blackballed Athenæum club of London also patriarch of Skull and Bones of Yale . . . B. A. and A. M. of Yale college as well as citizen of Noviomagus et cætera." Noviomagus, after some reflection, I take to be Croydon or some place near Croydon, in England, or perhaps Surbiton, and not one of the many other better known places to which that name was given in earlier days. There is, however, a club of antiquaries called the Noviomagians, to which Stevens belonged.

Henry Stevens came to London in 1845, and soon, as he has often said, "drifted" into the British museum. He retained his connection there as agent for the buying of books till the last; none of his financial misfortunes terminated it. Panizza, who then ruled the museum in a sense far other than that in which Mr. Bond now does, was his staunch friend. He understood Stevens' value, and he made use of his services in a way for which an American can never quite forgive either of the pair. Mr. Bond writes the notice of Stevens in *The Athenæum*, and says with a touch of pardonable exultation that as the result of Stevens' efforts the British museum now contains a more extensive library of American books than any single library in the United States. No doubt it does, and the fact is a reproach, not to Stevens, but to Americans in general and to the congress of the United States in particular.

Henry Stevens, an American to the backbone, would have rejoiced to do for his own country what he did for England. But England employed him to do it and America did not, and it is too late to repair the blunder. No collection of American books equal to that in the British Museum can ever again be got together. The time is past. Stevens' catalogue of this, completed in 1857, is a volume of 600 8vo pages, and includes 20,000 volumes. When he began collecting for the museum, in 1845, the whole number did not exceed 4,000. The other 16,000 are due to him. One of his reasons for printing the catalogue was to show, side by side, as he says, both the richness and the poverty of the collection. He effected his object, and between 1857 and 1862 the number doubled. That is to say, in 1862 the American department in the British museum possessed 40,000 volumes; counting only books printed in America, and not counting books, maps, etc., in all languages relating to America, in which the museum is very

rich, nor counting American books reprinted in this country.

And I suppose for much of what we actually have in America concerning our own country we have to thank Henry Stevens. He was the agent of many American collectors, often with authority to buy on his own judgment. His best known general client was perhaps Mr. James Lenox, whose library, now one of the chief treasures and ornaments of New York, was formed by Henry Stevens. No man knew so much about early editions of the bible; no one perhaps so much about early voyages and travels. These, with the Americana, were the subjects to which Stevens devoted himself, and on which he will ever remain an authority. Caxton was another topic which interested him, and he did much for the Caxton exhibition at South Kensington in 1877, cataloguing the bibles then shown. He had a wide and always an exact knowledge, not merely of books, but of subjects. Some of this he has put into print or read before literary societies, but the mass of it dies with him. He is a real loss to letters, as well as to bibliography. The English papers abound in eulogies on him. I hope the American papers do as much, for he was a man who held high abroad the American name. "Esteemed," says *The Times*, "for his knowledge, ability, and shrewd common sense, he was even more beloved for his frank manliness, his kindly nature, and rich, genial humor." The tribute is not too strong.

Pasteur's Treatment a Failure.

Three "Russian mujics," out of nineteen who were taken to Pasteur's laboratory, March 15th, for inoculation against the development of hydrophobia, died of that disease, or from the effect of the inoculations, soon after beginning the treatment. The rest are reported as doing well. All the patients had been bitten by mad wolves. The great difficulty in arriving at any conclusion in reference to results of any kind of treatment of such cases is that of one hundred persons bitten by hydrophobic animals only a small portion are liable to have the disease anyway; and if the disease should fail to develop in any of the remaining sixteen Russians now in Pasteur's laboratory, it would prove nothing for that method of treatment, for it is quite possible that of nineteen persons bitten, only three should have the hydrophobia under any circumstances. Pasteur's experiments thus far have only proved that his "preventive inoculations" can fail, not that they can ever save.—*From Dr. Foote's Health Monthly.*

Expert Photographing.

Mr. Eadweard Muybridge is an expert photographer who has achieved wonders in the way of photographing animals in motion, his object being to show how they move, run, jump, fly, etc. He is now at work at the University of Pennsylvania, where he has succeeded in taking 280 negatives in six seconds. In recording the movements of a bird he made fifteen successive negatives during one flap of its wing. On examining them he found that each feather performed an independent movement like an oar sculling. This explains how birds are able to soar through the air without any apparent motion, a thing which has always puzzled ornithologists.—*From Dr. Foote's Health Monthly.*

Beauty and Marriage.

He who marries beauty—unattended, even though it is—through pure love, marries not more wisely than he who marries through motives mercenary. The last gets at least something of real substance, while the first closes with an ignis-fatuus which soon vanishes, and yet, unlike its prototype, leaves a train of evils in its wake. I repeat, beauty is ever selfish, vain, cold and exacting, hard to win, and when won, owing to its vast estimation of self, hard to satisfy and keep. The beautiful forever look back upon their past triumphs, forever puff up their souls on past flattery, and ever consider their fortune beneath their desert. Especially should the poor—regardless of sex—be warned against marrying beauty. Wealth may with more impunity wed beauty, inasmuch as it can sometimes satisfy its demands; the poor may as well commit suicide at once.—*Rev. F. E. Valetta in St. Louis Magazine.*

Politics on the Bench.

If a judge of the superior court is mentioned in connection with the governorship of his state, is it right that insinuations should be thrown out by the press that, unless he resigns his office, he will employ corrupt means to further his political aspirations? Is honorable ambition to succeed by underhand methods only? Now, in casting about for a governor, each section has its especial pet. This should not warrant an attack upon some other good man, who may be mentioned, simply because he is an officer, and without the semblance of a charge to bring against him, expect that he is apt to take advantage of his position to make friends, to the disadvantage of his less favored opponent.

How are we to judge of the conduct or talents of another, except through the positions he is called to fill? Those who have given the greatest satisfaction in the past are the men who went up step by step, and not those who came from the shades of seclusion. A judge of the superior court, or any other man occupying an office of public trust, will not risk his good name in questionable measures, in the very sight of higher honors being offered by an admiring public. Rather will they be more guarded in speech and act, knowing that every word and action is sure to meet with the severest criticism. To resign is a tacit acknowledgment to be a candidate for a higher office means trickery, bribery, and corruption generally. To remain in the field against such unfounded opposition shows true courage and manhood. The newspaper that believes it can injure the reputation of a good man by advertising him as the judge of the superior court in politics, fall short of its expectations. Already such advertising has redounded to the good of the candidates and the mortification of nameless scribes. His case is strengthened, for the masses can see nothing in such a fight but vindictive persecution.

It is the merest folly to resign any office to become a candidate. If a man is pure he will employ honorable means to secure his success. If he is impure the public knows to well from past experience to what low and disgraceful acts he will resort to curry public favor, and his aspirations are nipped in the bud. As to selecting between the judge on the bench and the common politician, who will be apt to measure his conduct by the rules of propriety, the man who has a reputation to uphold, in accordance with the dignity of his position, or the one who feels no restraint and waits for the incumbent, whom, perhaps, death may have removed, to be carried from the presence of his associates, ere he hies himself away to elbow the powers that be, in his interest and behalf.

Courtesy, as well as necessity, demands that where a judge is disqualified in his own circuit, some one of his associates shall preside. If it is true that these rounds develop judges into politicians, then there is not a court of equity in the state.—*Cuthbert (Ga.) Appeal.*

A Fable for Children.

One day a plethoric salt sack was standing in the door of a Syracuse warehouse, watching the boys dive for nickels in the Erie canal, and at length it became so interested in the sport that it shouted to one of the kids "Hey! Johnnie, throw one of them things in for me and watch me go after it." The boy, delighted at such a chance for sport, threw the nickel as requested, and the salt sack, leaping in, was swallowed up in its own folly.

MORAL:—It is not often that we get made even fresher when we try to be too fresh ourselves, but freshness is a dangerous characteristic and it will not do to cultivate it too much. "*Verbum sap.*"—*Fred S. Ryman, in Goodall's Sun.*

Just So.

She was putting the child to sleep the other night when her husband exclaimed:

"You are the meanest woman I know of."

"Why, what do you mean?" she replied in astonishment.

"I mean," he answered with a meaning glance, "that you have just boycotted the baby."—*Boston Budget.*

BIG PAY FOR AUTHORS.

Gen. Grant Paid at the Rate of \$250 a Line for His Memoirs.

A British periodical has announced that the editor of a high-class journal for boys in America offered Mr. Gladstone \$500 for an article of fifteen thousand words, this being at the rate of about \$4 per line, and that Mr. Gladstone had declined the offer. Many publishers in this city, when shown the extract, said that they were not at all surprised that Mr. Gladstone should have refused to write for such a sum. Occupying as he does the high position of prime minister in England, the price offered seemed to be ridiculously low. The advantage of Mr. Gladstone's name as a contributor to the journal would have been worth the money offered even if he did not write a line. Some of the publishers said that, looking back on the past, it is really surprising to find what large amounts of money have been paid to writers for desirable articles. *Harper's Magazine* and *The Nineteenth Century* have often paid more than \$10 per line for suitable writings by popular authors. It is not an unusual thing to pay \$100 for a sonnet of only fourteen lines, a price nearly double that per line offered to the chief state officer of the British crown. More than \$8 per line has been paid by the owners of magazines for serial stories running a period of perhaps an entire year, if found readable, or possessing merit, or written by a person whose name would give it popularity. Especially is this the case in the matter of books written for a special object or connected with the history of the country. An instance may be cited in reference to the recent work published as Gen. Grant's Memoirs. This embraces two volumes, and has also, even at this early stage of the publication, given to the general's widow a sum equal to, if it does not exceed, \$20 per line, and may net her a much larger amount. Miss Cleveland's book is also spoken of as one which will realize to her a proportionate amount of money as royalties far exceeding that offered Mr. Gladstone for the article alluded to in the newspaper extract. During the early days of *The New York Ledger* Mr. Robert Bonner was noted for giving large sums of money to authors whose names were considered of more value than the amount of printed matter which was the result of their pens. Many of the writers to whom he paid what might appear to be almost fabulous sums, were then not so well known by name as Mr. Gladstone is to-day; but they were prominent enough for Mr. Bonner to desire that they should be recognized as contributors to his periodical. On one occasion he paid to Mr. Tennyson, now poet laureate of England, the large sum of \$5,000 for a poem which only made twenty lines in that paper. This was at the rate of \$250 a line—a price that would almost seem to be beyond the value of any written production.—*Galveston News.*

The Lost City of Norembega.

I recently visited the spot which Prof. Horsford, of Cambridge, has recently discovered to have been the site of the lost French city of Norembega. This lost city has always been supposed to have been situated on the Penobscot, in Maine, until these recent discoveries. Prof. Horsford declares it to have been in the town of Weston, in this state. It is just over the Waltham line, is a peninsula, bounded on one side by Stony brook, a stream about fifteen feet wide, and Charles river. All that remains to mark the site of Norembega are the trenches, which probably were just outside the stockade. These trenches, however, are clearly defined, and consist of one which follows the bounds of the peninsula and a shorter one which extends about the little hill on which the inclosure was probably situated. The trenches are three or four feet deep and five or six feet wide. The outer one is walled with stone. An evidence that these trenches are of a very old construction is seen in the trees which have grown up in them, displacing the stones. These trees are oak, which you know are of very slow growth, and are some of them over two feet in diameter.—*Boston Traveller.*

The American Tichborne claimant has sailed for Plymouth. He professes to believe that he will have no trouble in establishing his claims.